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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

SOUGH, HYUNG SUB

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3621

DATE MAILED: 04/24/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/668,421

Applicant(s)

ANANDA, MOHAN

Examiner

Hyung S. Sough

Art Unit

2161

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 February 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 198-238 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 198-238 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 September 2000 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 9.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

Art Unit: 2161

1. In view of preliminary amendment filed on September 22, 2000, which was recorded as Paper numbers 7 and 8 on February 8, 2002, the Office action mailed on August 18, 2001 has been withdrawn by the Examiner.

***Drawings***

2. The drawings are objected to by the Examiner for numerous informalities:

For example,

- They are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because reference characters "108" (FIG. 1) and "114" (FIG. 20) have both been used to designate "keyboard".

- They are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because reference character "114" has been used to designate both "coupling" (FIG. 1) and "keyboard" (FIG. 20); "102" has been used to designate both "user computer" (FIG. 1) and "CPU" (FIG. 20).

- They are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include the following reference sign(s) mentioned in the description: "118" (page 28, line 3), "15014" (page 28, line 8), "15015" (page 28, line 9), "15016" (page 28, line 23).

**Applicant is advised to carefully review all the drawings for further needed corrections.**

3. **A proposed drawing correction or corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.**

Art Unit: 2161

***Specification***

4. The disclosure is objected to because of numerous informalities:

For example,

- Page 25, line 20, should "114" after "keyboard" be --108--?
- Page 26, line 14, should "114" after "Coupling" be --134--?
- Page 29, line 7, should "120" after "interface" be --10020--?
- Page 29, line 8, should "136A" after "link" be --10021--?
- Page 30, line 6, before "150", --system--should be inserted.
- Page 59, line 12, should "12" after "computer" be --122--?

**Applicant is advised to carefully review the entire specification for further needed corrections.**

***Claim Objections***

5. Applicant is advised that should claim 199 be found allowable, claim 200 will be objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a duplicate thereof. When two claims in an application are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k).

**Applicant is advised to carefully review all the claims for further needed corrections.**

Art Unit: 2161

***Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112***

6. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

7. Claims **202, 206, 207, 208, and 212** and are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

- The preamble of the independent claim 198 specifies that "A system for secure processing of value -bearing items (VBIs) in a computer network" is being claimed. Of course, "A system for secure processing of value -bearing items (VBIs) in a computer network" does not include the value -bearing items (VBIs). However, the language "value -bearing item is a mail piece." in lines 1-2 of claim 202 as well as the language in claim 206, 207, 208 and 212 includes the value -bearing item as a positive element of the claimed subject matter. Hence, the bodies of the claims are not commensurate with their preamble.

**Applicant is advised to carefully review all the claims for further needed corrections.**

***Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103***

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

Art Unit: 2161

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 198-238 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cordery et al. (Cordery hereinafter: US PAT. 6,151,590) in view of Kara (US PAT. 5,822,739).

Cordery discloses a system for secure processing of value-bearing items (VBIs) in a computer network comprising:

a plurality of user terminals (e.g., elements 12') coupled to a computer network (e.g., an element 1);

a database (e.g., a dynamic link library 40) coupled to said network and remote from said plurality of user terminals; and

a server system (e.g., element 12) coupled to said network comprising a cryptographic device (e.g., a vault including an encryption module 50) for performing secure VBI functions.

**Re claim 198:** Cordery does not explicitly disclose that the database is for storing information about one or more users using said plurality of user terminals and the information stored in the database is utilized for performing VBI functions. However, Cordery discloses that DLL 40 stores transaction records reflecting the usage of postal funds vault 20 (col. 4, lines 23-25). Further, Kara discloses the use of an information record of prepaid postage credit to generate postage (e.g., col. 7, lines 14-17). Thus, it would have been within the level of

Art Unit: 2161

ordinary skill in the art to modify the system of Cordery by adopting the teaching of Kara to further facilitate the functions of the claimed system.

**Re claims 199 and 200:** Neither Cordery nor Kara explicitly discloses the use of a plurality of postal security device data stored in the database for ensuring authenticity or authority of each user, wherein each postal security device data is related to one of the users and the postal security device data related to the one of the users is loaded into the cryptographic device when one of the users requests to print a value-bearing item. However, in col. 13, lines 31-45 thereof, Kara discloses that the server (e.g., the Meter program) verifies whether the proper funding is available for the transaction requested by the user. Therefore it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to employ a plurality of postal security device data (e.g., prepaid postage credit) stored in the database for ensuring authenticity or authority of each user (e.g., to prevent fraud by unauthorized users), wherein each postal security device data is related to one of the users and the postal security device data related to the one of the users is loaded into the cryptographic device when one of the users requests to print a value-bearing item (e.g., to prevent fraud by unauthorized users).

**Re claims 201, 202, 202, 203, and 204:** Cordery discloses:

- database comprises data for creating indicium, account maintenance, and revenue protection (e.g., col. 6, lines 49-53)
- the value-bearing item is a mail-piece (e.g., postage for a mail)
- the cryptographic device generates a digital signature (e.g., digital token).

Art Unit: 2161

- the cryptographic device encrypts the request information (col. 3, line 65-col. 4, line 3).

**Re claim 205:** In Cordery, it would have been inherent to generate data sufficient to print a postal indicium in compliance with postal service regulation on said mail piece, since otherwise the system would not work.

**Re claims 206 and 208:** Cordery discloses that his system is a value printing system without explicit disclosure of the value-bearing system being a ticket or a coupon. However, Kara discloses a ticket or any form of indicia as value-bearing items (col. 15, lines 23-32). Thus, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use any value-bearing items, e.g., a ticket, coupon, certificate, check, etc., as disclosed by Kara.

**Re claim 207:** Cordery does not explicitly disclose the use of a bar code. However, as shown by Kara, the use of a bar code with a system of the sort here involved is well known.

**Re claims 209-215:** Cordery discloses the postal security device data comprising an ascending register value, a descending register value, a respective cryptographic device ID, and an indicium key certificate serial number; encryption keys; and the use of a password (e.g., col. 4, line 55-col. 7, line 15). Cordery does not explicitly disclose the claimed public and private keys. However, as shown by Kara (e.g., col. 10, lines 18-29), the claimed public/private key feature is well-known encryption method in the art.



Art Unit: 2161

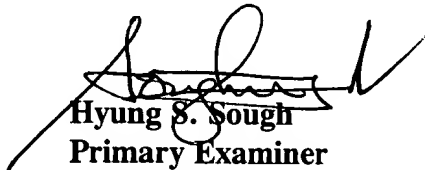
**Re claims 216-227:** The claimed method would have been obvious to use the system which would have been obvious Cordery in view of Kara as stated supra (claims 198-200 and 202-208).

**Re claims 228-238:** As stated supra, the claimed method would have been obvious Cordery in view of Kara (claims 198 and 201-207, 209 and 210) including the step of printing an image (e.g., FIG. 7 of Cordery) except for the use of a plurality of cryptographic devices. However, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to employ any number of servers or cryptographic devices as desired, since it has been held that mere duplication of the essential working parts of a device involves only routine skill in the art. *St. Regis Paper Co. v. Bemis Co.*, 193 USPQ 8.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hyung S. Sough whose telephone number is (703) 308-0505. The Examiner can normally be reached Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM EST.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, The Examiner's Supervisor, James P. Trammell, can be reached on (703) 305-9768.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703)305-3900. The Group Fax number is (703) 308-1396.



Hyung S. Sough  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 2161

shs  
April 19, 2002